The Revolutionary Age

A Chronicle and Interpretation of Events in Europe

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Withdraw From Russia!

THE world is preparing for peace, and the world is happy. The terrible agony of death, of a world devoting its energy and its finest instincts to the tasks of death, is at an end.

Peace—and the problems of making a new world. Peace—and the joy of devoting one's self to life, and not death. Peace—and the opportunity of securing out of the horror that is ended the impulse and the will to make peace splendid and everlasting.

But this peace is not, as yet, universal. The nations that granted armistice and peace to Germany, Austria and Bulgaria refuse to grant armistice and peace to Russia. The Russian people, 5,000,000 of whom died in the war, who have suffered more than any other people, are refused an armistice, are refused peace, are still in the clutch of war.

French and British, American and Japanese troops, are still in Archangel, still in Vladivostok. Fighting is reported as proceeding between Soviet troops and the Anglo-French troops.

Russia was formerly associated with the Allies; yet the Allies grant peace to their former enemy, and refuse it to their former associate.

Why this discrimination? If blood is the price of peace, the Russian people have paid the price in full, an infinitely heavier price than that of any other nation at war.

Our people are happy at the coming of peace, but the Russian people are threatened with a new war, they cannot devote themselves fully and confidently to the tasks of peace and life. Alien troops apparently still threaten the Russian people, in whom is an overwhelming love of peace and the simple joys of life.

Is this Soviet Russia's fault? The facts are the most convincing answer:

The Soviet Government recently, through Commissaire of Foreign Affairs Tchicherin, proposed an armistice to the Allies. Absolutely no answer was given to this proposal—and alien troops are still in Archangel and Vladivostok.

According to declarations of President Wilson and the State Department, the purpose of the Allies was to get the Czecho-Slovaks out of Russia, not to re-establish an "eastern front" or to interfere in the internal affairs of the Russian people. The Soviet Government has declared and emphasized its readiness to negotiate with the allies concerning the Czecho-Slovaks and to facilitate their departure from Russia. These official proposals to the Allies have produced absolutely no response ... Alien troops are still in Archangel and Vladivostok.

To negotiate with the Soviet Government, it is said, means to recognize the Soviet Government; therefore, there can be no negotiations, because the Soviet Government is an autocracy. But the Allies recognized the bloody autocracy of the Czar, they recognized the murderous autocracy of Turkey, they even recognized the autocracy of the Kaiser! Why discriminate against the Soviet Government? ... Alien troops are still in Archangel and Vladivostok.

It is not because the Soviet Government is an autocracy. The Soviet Government is a democracy, representing the majority of the people, the workers and peasants. It has existed for more than one year, and is becoming stronger in spite of attacks and counter-revolutionary plots, in spite of starvation. The Russian people, who had the revolutionary energy to overthrow Czarism, to overthrow the government of Lvov, Guchkov & Co., to overthrow Kerensky, would and could overthrow the Soviet Government if they wished to. But they don't, the Soviet Government is their government, the Russian people are the Government. To ask the Russian people to overthrow their government is equivalent to asking a man to cut his own throat.

The Russian people have contributed enormously to the coming of peace; it was their revolutionary ideas and propaganda that produced revolution in Bulgaria Austria and Germany, and without this revolution the war would still be on. The Russian people have died and starved for one year to bring revolution in Germany, and peace—but there is no peace for them. ... Alien troops are still in Archangel and Vladivostok

Men and women of the United States, our slogan should be: "The Russian people shall have peace. Withdraw from Russia!"

They said that the Soviet Government was an ally of the Kaiser, was prolonging the war, was aiding Germany to win the war. These were lies, and events have proven them lies; but now even this lying pretext no longer exists—withdraw from Russia!

What government Russia should have is the business of the Russian people. The Allies have officially assented to that; but in practice they have encouraged "governments" in Russia which represent no one but counter-revolutionary conspirators. They have violated the principle of self-determination of nations. They have morally and physically waged war upon the Soviet Government and the Russian people.

And men still die. Men and women in Russia are still being starved. Is it all to crush the great Socialist Republic in Russia, the magnificent pledge of a finer and more human world?

The intentions of the American Government are in doubt, although it has officially declared against intervention. Secret diplomacy is in action. But the newspapers are openly mobilizing public opinion for war against the Soviet Republic, against the Russian people, who have had more soldiers killed in the war than perhaps all the other nations put together. Is their payment a new war?

And in this murderous press campaign, the mask is off. War against the Soviet Government is urged, not because it is "pro-German," but because it is revolutionary and Socialist!

The Russian people have paid the price of peace in blood. Out of the agony and the ruins they are building a new and finer society: let them build in peace!

Alien troops are still in Archangel and Vladivostok: Withdraw from Russia! Withdraw immedi ly!

The Time For Action Has Come!

WITH the refusal of the Supreme Court of the United States to grant Mooney a new trail the case now enters its final stage. From a legal standpoint, only by the executive pardon of the governor of the State of California can Mooney be snatched from the gallows, but there is a power stronger than any law ever placed on a statute book that may step forward and cry halt to this murder—the power of the will of the people.

For nearly two and a half years Tom Mooney has suffered under one of society's heaviest penalties; the denial of association with his fellowmen. During this time his every action has been dictated by the will of his jailers, when he shall lie down and when he shall get up, when he shall eat and when he shall remain hungry, when he shall speak and when he shall remain silent, when he must breathe the fetid air of a prison cell and when he may walk in the prison yard and "gaze upon that little tent of blue that prisoners call the sky." Cut off from all intercourse with those dear to him for two and a half years he has paced a narrow cell, counting his steps, listening to the clang of iron gates and the harsh voices of command and waiting...

Now he is told that all these weary months are to culminate in a walk to the gallows, a binding of his arms and feet, a masking of his face, a word of command and a lurch downward... And he draws himself up, his lips curl and he replies "I have nothing to say".

"I have nothing to say"! Mooney knows all the forces that have combined against him, he is aware of all the facts in the case—and with a fine scorn he answers.

But what have you, the workers of this country, to say? Painstakingly each movement demanded by the law has been gone through and each time the machinery has been thrown out of gear, finally the repairing engineers of that machinery—the Supreme Court of the United States—have refused to function.

Some of the highest persons in both the state and the federal executives have declared their belief in Mooney's innocence, others, including one of the judges involved in the case, have expressed doubts that his guilt was proven, while to the ordinary reader, from the evidence presented in the case and the character of the witnesses upon whose testimony conviction was secured, it is clear that not only is Mooney not guilty but that he is the victim of a deliberate "frame up" by the forces of Capitalism. President Wilson has twice urged the governor of California to extend clemency to Mooney. Mooney has not asked for clemency nor does labor ask for it in his behalf. If Mooney is guilty there is no reason why clemency should be extended to him, if he is not guilty then it is he who should decide whether or not he will extend clemency to his would-be murderers. And Mooney is not guilty!

Labor has been patient long. Long has its back been bent to the blows of the master class, but the times are changing. The Mooney case clearly demonstrates that law and justice are not meant for the workers, that the guarantees of the bourgeoisie break down in class conflict, that when the issue is between capital and labor, capital throws of the velvet glove of justice and mercy and reveals the mailed fist of domination and hate. Mooney was a danger to capitalist interests: therefore away with him, but a with him in such a manner as will not awaken resentm away with him by "lawful" means, let him be hanged a legally constructed gallows—not on a trestle bridg

The workers of Europe have seen the significance of case. In Russia, Italy, Holland, England and Ireland t have contributed money to the defense fund and ha brought pressure to bear on their governments to mal them intercede on Mooney's behalf, but with the exce ion of the committee of investigation appointed by th President and his appeals to the governor of Californi nothing has been done. The tedious legal line has bee followed until it finally led to the refusal of the Supreme Court to grant a new trail and now comes the end unless labor speaks out.

Mooney, condemned to death because he loved his kind, because he hated the distorting of their bodies and minds in the cruel maw of Capitalism—the mills, mines, factories and fields—because he hated the crushing of little children, the flowers of mankind, in the sweatshops, Mooney has "nothing to say" about the dreary days in the death-house. Shall labor also "have nothing to say"? Or will it speak with one voice crying: "Stop this murder, set Mooney free or we will stop the wheels of industry not only in California, not only in the Americas but throughout the entire world"?

Will you speak, will you act, or shall "Labor walk beside the mules"?

The Coming Of The Final Struggle

By Gregory Weinstein

IN THE past revolutions took place once in a hundred years, generally speaking. There have been very few in the history of mankind. Generations have come and gone without witnessing, much less participating in, any great uprising of the masses against their oppressors; learning about them only from the tales of old men—"the veterans", or from school text books; and the conceptions formed about them were that they were something semi-fantastic, something that had taken place "years and years ago", back in the heroic epoch, when, so it seemed, the people had been built of different stuff—"you are not the warriors"—; a time that had been and never would return.....

But even these exceptional revolutions, scattered through centuries, left an indelible mark on the whole future development of mankind, having given peculiar color to whole epochs of history. In this sense, the influence of the great French Revolution of 1789 has not yet been exhausted even to-day...

Now, by all indications, the world has entered a new path of its development—a path fraught with revolutionary storms.

During the short period of one year two such events of world importance have taken place—the proletarian revolution in Russia and, promising to become a proletarian one, the revolution in Germany.

Can these great events pass without leaving a mark on mankind—on the toiling masses—because just now the war has been brought to an end; the war which by its very existence has awakened mankind from lethargy?

Certainly not! The spirit of discontent and protest, the contagious "revolutionary germ" will spread into the adjacent countries, where also, according to authoritative statements in the bourgeois press, "there is observed a sufficient quantity of combustible material".

And first of all, as was to be expected, the neutral countries have become "contaminated."

The countries of the "Allied cause" at the present moment are wholly given over to the "intoxication of victory", which temporarily has affected the working masses. For them, the moment of bitter disappointment, "counting the wounds", judging and "mature thinking" is yet far away. However, it must be noted, that, even at the present moment, there are indications of the approaching moment of reawakening. It would suffice to mention, for example, the demand made by the French Socialists or the resolution of the British Labor Party concerning the end of "civil peace" and on the recall of "labor ministers" from the Cabinet.

But the war, insofar as the workers of the neutral countries are concerned, has not brought them even the flickering, illusory "victories", that could provoke at least a temporary intoxication. Instead the war has brought them enough of suffering, misery, want and starvation, and even more than enough, more than, according to the "scale", they should have gotten.

Hence it is not surprising, that from all neutral countries come reports "of alarming character" about the growing revolutionary ferment among the working masses.

There was a general strike in Switzerland. In Holland "Socialists—even moderate—appeal to the workers to seize the government"... In Sweden; "the Socialists issued a manifesto calling for the formation of Soviets of workmen's and soldiers deputies everywhere, in order to establish a Socialist Republic..." In Denmark: "bourgeois and governmental circles are beginning to get alarmed..."

Such are the reports reaching here from neutral countries.

"For the Kaiser is but the vilest flower of a system, and it is the system and the spirit which underlies it that must the workers in these countries, as compared with the pre-revolutionary relation of forces in Russia, Germany and Austria, is not wholly in favor of the bourgeoisie, that the power of resistance of the bourgeoisie and the governments in these neutral countries is considerably lower than it was in Germany and Austria—governments protected by the armor of militarism—then it becomes clear, that once the working class in these neutral countries rises it will inevitably become a victor.

And, of course, it goes without saying, that the victory of the workers in these neutral countries—in spite of the fact that they play a secondary role in the family of the bourgeois states—will have deep significance, politically speaking, as to the general result.

That victory, first of all, will strengthen and prolong the universal "great unrest" which was begun by the Russian, Austrian and German revolutions. It will bring new faith, boldness and energy into the ranks of the working class fighting for its emancipation; it will be a new blow and a great sign of the "beginning of the end" of the domination of the bourgeoisie. This victory will increase "the anxieties" among the international bourgeoisie in the task of restoring "order" in the countries contaminated with the "Bolshevist anarchy", thereby considerably decreasing their power. Besides, the attempt of the bourgeoisie to use the working regiments of the Allied countries for "pacifying" the countries contaminated by the revolution,—an attempt which this time they will not be able to disguise "for politeness' sake" with beautiful phrases of "fighting for democracy"—may well prove the last drop which will overflow the cup of patience of the workers of Allied countries.

Peace—Where There Is No Peace

IN A remarkable, but misnamed, article entitled "Peace at Last" The Nation takes a stand long wanted in the liberal press of this country. One of the disappointments of America's part in the war was the slavish conformity to the psychology of the mob of the liberal periodicals of the country. When the English, French and belligerent European liberal press generally spoke out against injustice as they saw it the voice of this section of the American people was practically silent. What few papers were started as a reaction to this state of affairs were quickly put out of business without any protest from their contemporaries.

Now The Nation speaks clearly and unequivocally:

"For if the mills of the gods have caught and crushed the Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs and the Kings of Bavaria and what not, they have still much crushing to do," it says. "Every remaining king, whether well-meaning figure head or despot, should and must go. But these are now few in number. Then we agree with the German Socialists that no man who had anything to do with starting this war should remain in public life. In Russia, in Austria-Hungary, and in Turkey they are gone. We hope and trust that the spirit of revolution abroad will not die until all the makers of secret treaties are cast out, and with them, as among the worst enemies of mankind, the armament manufacturers, the Krupps, the Creusots, the Armstrongs, the Whitworths, and our own lesser armor and gun-makers. We desire no end to revolution abroad until custom-houses everywhere have gone by the board. We wish no end to democratic ferment in Europe until the professional diplomat of the past has been ground flat, and with him those alleged statesmen who believe that the backward or sparsely-inhabited spaces of the earth exists only to be exploited. We wish no end to the revolution until there shall no longer be talk of developing hinterlander, spheres of influence, and colonies, but of some means of holding them in trust by joint international agreement for the benefit of those to whom the soil rightfully belongs. Thus we should have England retire from Egypt and Persia, the Italians from Tripolli, and Japan from Kiao-Chou, France from Cochin-China and Madagascar, and Belgium from the blood stained Congo, while the United States sets the example by retairing from the Philippines, Haiti, San Domingo, and Nicaragua. We wish no limit to the spread of liberalism until the vicious doctrine that a country shall protect by the force of arms its citizens who invest abroad shall be forever discarded. For we are not of those who can see the mote only in the eye of our Allies or enemies. There are those in plenty —men like Taft and Roosevelt, preachers of reaction and hate—in this country for whom the mills of the gods are turning slowly—slowly, but with the terrifying, inescapable certainty which marks the progress of the glacier that no human agency can stay.

For the Kaiser is but the vilest flower of a system, and it is the system and the spirit which underlie it that must go. The battle against Prussian militarism is not yet won. Its first bloody phase is, thank God, at end. But if this war has proved anything, it is that the spirit of Prussianism exists everywhere, in Paris, in London, in Rome—very strongly—and in Washington. Only in Moscow is it wholly crushed to earth. We shall neither have made this the last of wars nor safeguarded democracy, if we do not extirpate everywhere the spirit that would not only conquer other people's lands as Germany conquered Belgium and Serbia, and Italy conquered Tripoli, but would enslave their souls and bodies as well. As long as it is left to a few men anywhere to decide whether nations shall go to war, as long as there are men abroad like Mr. Taft to say that just when we have crushed German militarism we must war against the Russians and Germans to see to it that the revolutions there result in precisely the kind of Governments that we prefer, just so long is the war to end war merely begun."

This is surely catching the spirit that is abroad in the land waiting to find voice. It is not Socialism, but it is surely the spirit of Americanism as America's great dead: Garrison, Phillips, Brown, Jefferson and the rest felt it.

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IN THE UKRAINE—AND ELSEWHERE

THE newspapers, with their usual stupidity or perversity, report that "the Bolshevik and pro-German government of the Ukraine has been overthrown by anti-Bolshevik troops." The Ukrainian government, a brutal military autocracy, has been pro-German, but never Bolshevik. In fact, the Allies encouraged the formation of this government in the hope that it would act against the Bolsheviki and Germany: the mistake of the Allies has been that they imagined the Bolsheviki were pro-German when, as a matter of fact, the opponents of the Bolsheviki were pro-German because they expected that German militarism would aid them to restore private property and capitalism in Russia. The Ukrainian bourgeois-feudal government invited Austrian and German troops to crush the people, precisely as did the Junkers and bourgeoisie of Finland. These reactionary governments, which public opinion among the Allies encouraged and approved, have been carrying out a ruthless campaign of murder among the masses, assisted by Imperial German troops. While protesting against the largely mythical terrorism in Soviet Russia, there has been scarcely a murmur about the horrible massacres in Finland—these massacres were against Socialists! Indeed, the government of France all during the period of these unparalleled massacres maintained diplomatic relations with the Finnish government; recently it broke off relations—because the bourgeois Finns had placed a German princeling upon the throne! The news from Ukraine is confused, but clearly, now that the Austro-German troops have been withdrawn a movement of the masses is developing against the murderous bourgeois-Junker government. This movement is developing equally in Finland, Lithuania and Poland.

A LABOR PEACE CONFERENCE

THERE is apparently a magic about the idea of "labor" being represented at the coming peace conference, or holding simultaneously an independent "labor" conference. Conferences of reactionary "labor" accomplish nothing—or harm. Proletarian action, the development of class consciousness and class power, is the decisive factor. Majority Socialists in the French Parliament urge that "labor" should be represented at the peace conference. But if the representation consists of men such as Albert Thomas, who have consistenly supported reaction, what is the value to the proletariat? At most, they will prevail upon the plenipotentiaries to make "concessions" to democracy, and make easier the deception of the workers. Imagine Samuel Gompers representing "labor" at the conference! Gompers has promoted the utmost in reaction, worse than a reactionary bourgeois, slandered the Russian Revolution and insisted upon intervention in Russia. Gompers has forged shackles with which to fetter the action of the proletariat. The A. F. of L. "labor missions" to Europe were used as instruments by the reactionary forces in Great Britain, France and Italy against the awakening movement of the workers for independent and aggressive class action—they were directly counter-revolutionary. It is a waste of energy to bother about conferences of this sort; the only "labor conference" of real value would be a conference composed exclusively of definitely international Socialists. Our energy must be devoted to arousing proletarian class consciousness and class action. Conferences are often proposed as a means to avoid the real task, and palter on the issues of the day. The struggle of the proletariat for Socialism, revolutionizing the minds and concepts of the workers, acquiring class consciousness and class power—in that is comprised the policy of Socialism and the militant proletariat on the issue of peace and all issues of the day. The indications are that any "labor representation" will be in the nature of camouflage, and that a real Socialist Conference will not be allowed to meet.

THE DRIVE AGAINST BOLSHEVISM

SOME weeks before the conclusion of the armistice, a German imperialistic newspaper declared that the Allies should not insist upon the German troops evacuating Russian territory, since the moment the Germans got out the Bolsheviki would come in; and surely, insisted this German hireling of Imperialism, Bolshevism is as much a menace to the Allies as to Germany. Well, Germany itself developed Bolshevism: instead of German Imperialism crushing Bolshevism, it is itself being crushed by Bolshevism. Already movements of the masses—and Bolshevism is simply the masses in revolutionary action—are developing in Russian territory formerly occupied by Germany. Public opinion among the Allies, as expressed in the reactionary press, inclines toward the German view of Bolshevism. Upon receipt of the news of a revolution in Austria, the revolution which hastened peace negotiations, the Nebraska "State Journal" of November 2, in an editorial reprinted by the New York "Evening Post" of November 7, said: "A shiver will go through the marrow of Europe when it is known that a council of workmen and soldiers has been formed in Vienna. ... To destroy Prussianism without driving the Central Empires into the red terror is not the least of the many delicate and complicated tasks before the Allied War Council at Versailles. ... Austria, if signs of civil disorder appear there, will be in reach of Allied troops to steady the situation until orderly responsible government can be arranged." On November 7, a few days before the Kaiser abdicated—or at least ran away—the New York "Evening Sun" compared developments in Germany to the earlier stages of the Russian Revolution, warned of Bolshevism, and said: "It is plainly symptomatic of anarchy and chaos. ... It may come to the point where the Ally Powers and the United States may be compelled to lend aid to the German Government in restraining the whirlwind of popular wrath and preventing too great excess. ... There remains no choice to the Allies save to pacify the country and turn it over to a sobered and stable popular government inspired by the judgment of the citizens, not by the passions of the mob." Two days after, the Boston "Post" suggested that it might be necessary for the Allies to keep the autocracy in control of Germany for some time yet to come! This drive against Bolshevism, which is villified, lied about and misrepresented as anarchy and murder when it is simply revolutionary Socialism, is general in the press. How they love autocracy and reaction, how they love Kaiserism, when it is a choice between Kaiserism and Socialism!

PAUSE AND PREPARATIONS

THE situation in Germany preserves its general characteristics. There is a pause, in appearance, at least, in decisive developments; the pause, however, being a breathing spell during which the opposing forces are making preparations for the final decisive struggle.

"Socialist" Chancellor Ebert continues to make threats of Allied intervention, in the event that "anarchy"—that is to say, Socialism—should develop in Germany. A meeting of delegates of the Soldiers' Councils in Berlin discussed the organization of a Red Guard; Ebert declared that it was unnecessary, "adding a warning that if the enemy saw anarchy prevailing he would dictate peace conditions that would utterly destroy the German economic life."

This threat of Allied intervention is being used by the moderates to retain control. In this connection, it is interesting to recall that the Kaiser, in his speech to the workmen at Krupps' some months ago, emphasized that Allied intervention in Russia indicated the purposes of the Allies—possibly to warn "his" workers not to make a revolution! How long will the moderates succeed in this game, previously attempted on a small scale by Wilhelm?

The temporary pause in the German Revolution is undoubtedly partly, if not largely due, to the international situation, doubts and fears of what the Allies might do in the event of completing the conquests of the Revolution. This threat as to what the Allies would do was used again and again by the moderates in Russia, provoking from Trotzky the characterization, "revolutionists with the souls of hares." But the hares and the traitors were overwhelmed by the oncoming proletarian revolution. ... The revolutionary class struggle in any nation necessarily projects an international expression. ...

It is largely the international alignment that maintains the essentially counter-revolutionary government of Ebert in power. This is a vital fact. "The new government," said the Boston "Post" in its November 21 issue, "has hammered well into the public mind that any disorder will react severely, and using the name of President Wilson as a club, have declared that the Allies will renew the war and refuse to save Germany from starvation unless perfect order is maintained. The government seems to have been successful in forcing the people to believe that they alone can secure concessions from the Allies."

But for how long? In this emergency, the American proletariat should insistently and emphatically make it clear that our government will not intervene in the revolutionary developments of Germany. ...

The international problem may cause a temporary pause in events, but it cannot of itself determine the destiny of the German Revolution. The decisive factor is the alignment of forces within Germany itself.

It is apparent that the prestige of the Ebert Provisional Government flows from the prospective attitude of the Allies. But outside of that, the government's prestige seems to be slight. Indeed, it is developing into the shuttlecock of a great and decisive struggle, the opposing groups using the present pause for necessary preparations.

The reactionary forces are organizing, encouraged probably by the international situation, the retention of Dr. Solf in the government, and the government's appointment of reactionary bourgeois "liberals" as "heads of departments." Leaders of the Catholic Centre Party in Cologne declared at the recent meeting that the party will not recognize a republic and will use all efforts to restore monarchy. A democratic popular league has, according to report, been organized by such men as Count von Bernstorff, Dr. Walter Rathenau, and the Pan-German Friederich Naumann, author of "Mittel-Europa." Plans are being prepared to organize a non-Socialist Republican party, consisting of progressives and "radical" National Liberals, "with a democratic and far-reaching social program." The reactionary imperialistic interests are playing shrewdly upon the fears of Socialism that devour the middle class and Capitalism, and intriguing for a restoration of monarchy, which is favored by representatives of the moderate, liberal and conservative parties. The representatives of capital are dissatisfied with the government and are mobilizing for the assault. They demand the immediate convocation of the Constituent Assembly, which Chancellor Ebert declares will "probably" meet on February 2.

As the reactionary forces prepare for the attack, another attack is converging upon the Provisional Government directed by revolutionary Socialistm.

The general character of the developing revolutionary attack is indicated in a dispatch dated November 20:

"The Berlin Council of Workmen and Soldiers in a stormy meeting voted against the summoning of a Constituent Assembly, and demanded a Congress of Soldier and Workmen delegates. Marines at Bremen, Hamburg and other German ports are becoming suspicious of the new Berlin government, claiming that it is bringing the country to a counter-revolution."

Simultaneously, friction about authority is developing between the government and the Councils, a conflict over the problem of power which will soon become the decisive issue.

It is not apparent why the Berlin Council voted against summoning the Constituent Assembly, whether simply because it fears a counter revolution, or because of a more revolutionary purpose. The summoning of a national Congress of Councils, however, is bound to bring the issue of power to a head—whether power to a republican government of all the classes, or power to the Councils. All power to the Councils would mean definitely a proletarian revolution, the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, the initiation of the process of reconstructing society on a communist Socialist basis.

The Councils of Soldiers and Workmen are now, however, at a "centre" stage—they refuse to grant all power to the Provisional Government, yet they have not developed the necessary revolutionary energy and initiative to decree all power to the Councils. But this issue of power, and the attitude of the Councils, can come to a head only by means of a national Congress of Councils. The Constituent Assembly or a national Congress of Councils—it is now a race as to which gets there first. Which gets there first, however, is not all-important: the Congress may reject all power to the Councils, the Constituent Assembly may be impotent because of Council domination. But the struggle will become more implacable.

The Councils are still hesitating or preparing—it is a mixture of both. The Berlin Council has rejected the idea of organizing a Red Guard and expressed strong opposition to the Spartacus Group, the revolutionary Socialists who have now organized independently as the Communist Party, which is equally the party designation of the Bolsheviki in Russia.

Strong opposition to the Bolsheviki prevailed in the Soviets during the earlier period of the Russian Revolution. The Soviets, precisely as the German Councils at this moment, tried to steer a middle course: neither all power to the Provisional Government nor all power to the Soviets. But this policy could not endure: either all power to the bourgeois republican government and the annihilation of the Soviets, or all power to the Soviets and a revolutionary Socialist Republic. They might temporize, but the issue would flare up. Class conciliation is not a successful policy during a revolution: one class or the other must conquer. Neither the masses nor the classes were satisfied with the make-shift "Socialist" Provisional Government: it met neither bourgeois nor proletarian requirements. During September and October 1917, the bourgeois and proletarian forces prepared to make an end of compromise: the one, through Kornilov and a coup-d'etat; the other through Bolshevism and all power to the Soviets. The struggle flared up—November 7—and the proletariat conquered.

Is this what is coming in Germany? The tendency and the alignment are there: Germany is at the Kerensky stage. With this difference: in Russia, the Kerensky stage developed under revolutionary pressure of the masses; did the Kerensky stage in Germany come exclusively out of revolutionary pressure, or is largely due to the experience of the Russian Revolution from which the German bourgeoisie has profited? Has the proletariat developed sufficient revolutionary reserves for definite, aggressive, final action? Upon the answer depends the rapidity of revolutionary developments in Germany.

Latest reports from England to the effect that Lloyd-George and Bonar Law are issuing manifestoes regarding "reforms" would seem to indicate that the recent decision of the British Labor Party is already bearing fruit. The edibility of the fruit is however quite another matter. We notice that the "Solution of the housing problem" and the "Reform of the House of Lords" are among the lucious fruits so temptingly dangled before the worker's eyes.

Although we are personally of the opinion that the House of Lords is too old to reform it might be worth trying, nevertheless, how moving the noble lords down to Paradise Alley, or some other equally fetid East End slum, and moving the East-enders to the palatial town and country houses of the lords, would affect the housing problem.

Next to the Kaiser abdicating the throne for the sake of the German people Samuel Gompers' defiance to the capitalists is the season's best joke.

The Origins of Worker's Control of Industry In Russia

By John Reed

The following article was written when Reed arrived in Sweden in February last, on his way from Russia, in answer to false stories being circulated by the capitalist press about the management of Russian industries. Owing to a variety of circumstances it has not hitherto been published and now appears for the first time.

THE capitalist press has diligently spread abroad all sorts of stories about the foolish conduct of the Russian industrial workers during the Revolution; of their extravagant demands, their ignorance, and the brutality with which they have treated manufacturers and technical experts. The outside world has received the impression that the Russian workingman gets enormous wages, refuses to work, and that in short he has ruined Russian industry.

It is true that in Russia industry is at a low ebb. In the first place, coal was impossible to procure for a long time, because Kaledine and his Cossacks had control of the Donetz Basin, and after them the Germans; machinery has deteriorated, owing to the fact that no new parts have come from abroad for two long years and more, and the technical experts, engineers, etc., faithful to the capitalist class, at first refused to submit to the direction of the workmen's committees; and last of all, the working class itself has been too hotly absorbed in politics, and in fighting the enemies of the Revolution—from Kornilov to Kerensky, Kaledine, the Ukrainian Rada, Germany, the Czecho-Slovas and the Allies. But on the technical side, if Russian industry is ruined, it is the manufacturers and owners who are to blame—they who tried to starve the Revolution by shutting down the factories and mines, by ruining organization, wrecking the railroads, deliberately destroying the machinery of industry, and flooding the mines.

Many of the tales about extravagant labor demands, of workmen's control committees which broke down, etc., are of course true. But the important thing is that till the November Revolution, the Russian workmen as a whole were still over-worked, underpaid, (except in certain special factories), and that at the same time there was growing up all over Russia a spontaneous industrial organization capable of being at least the promising frame-work of a new industrial order.

The three cardinal demands of the November Revolution were, Peace, Land to the Peasants, and Workers' Control of Industry, and of these three the last point of Workers' Control was perhaps the most important, because the tendency of new Russia is more and more toward the abolition of the political state, and the evolution of industrial democracy.

The history of labor organization in Russia is very brief. Before the 1905 Revolution no labor unions, in the strict sense of the word, existed. The only recognized workmen's representation was the election of a starosta, or "elder", much as the starostas are elected in Russian villages, and even in Russian prisons, and with about as much power. In 1905, some 200,000 workmen joined the unions. Stolypin suppressed them. Some little unions persisted, but they were finally crushed, their funds seized, their leaders sent to Siberia. After that the unions existed half-secretly, with a membership over all Russia of about 10,000. During the war, however, all attempts at labor organization were ruthlessly stamped out, and workmen discovered in any connection with labor organizations were sent to the front.

The Revolution released the workers partly from this bondage, and pushed toward rapid organization. After four months of the Revolution the first conference of the Professional Unions of All-Russia was held—200 delegates representing more than 1,400,000 workers. Two months later the membership was calculated at more that 3,000,000, according to the report of Riazonov; it is now more than double that number.

Now these Professional Unions (Professionalne Soyuse) were modelled on the French syndicats, with the addition of government co-operation suggested by the German labor-union system. They were mainly concerned with the fight for shorter hours, higher wages—in short, the routine business of labor-unions everywhere. For instance, they established a system of Conciliation Chambers for the hearing of industrial disputes—for industrial arbitration under government supervision. But their important work was the organization of all the workers into great industrial unions, in the dissolution of all the petty craft organizations, merging them into the big unions. Thus in the Government gun-factory at Sestroretzk, for example, all those who worked upon the manufacture of rifles—the men who forged barrels, the machinists who fitted the mechanism, the carpenters who made the stock—all were members of the Metal-Workers' Union.

But the Professional Unions, in spite of their importance, occupied a secondary position in the workers' minds. In the first place, the Soviets, half-political, half-economic, absorbed their energies; in the second place, those unique organizations, spontaneously created by the Russian Revolution, the Factory Shop Committees (Fabritchnoe Zavodski Comitiet) required their attention. These latter are the real foundation of the Workers' Control of Industry.

The Factory Committees originated in the government munitions factories. At the outbreak of the Revolution, most of the administrators of the government factories, chiefly military officers who brutalized the workers with all the privilege of military law, ran away. Unlike the private manufacturers, these government officials had no interest in the business. The workers, in order to prevent the closing down of the factory, had to take charge of the administration. In some places, as at Sestroretzk, this meant taking charge of the town also. And these government plants were run with such inefficiency, so much corruption, that the Workers' Committee, although it raised wages, shortened hours, and hired more hands, actually increased production and reduced expenses—at the same time completing new buildings begun by dishonest contractors, constructing a fine new hospital, and giving the town its first sewerage system. With these government plants the Factory Shop Committees had a comparatively easy time. For a long time after the Revolution there was no authority to question the authority of the workers, and finally when the Kerensky government began to interfere, the workers had complete control. Working as they were on munitions, with standing orders, there was no excuse for closing down, and in fuel and raw materials the government itself supplied them. Although many times under the inefficient Kerensky government the government shops were in danger of closing down, and the Shop Committees had to send their delegates to Baku to buy oil, to Kharkov for coal, and to Siberia for iron.

From Sestroretzk the Shop Committee spread like wildfire to other government shops—then to private establishments working on government orders, then to private industries, and finally to the factories which were closed down at the beginning of the Revolution. First the movement was confined to Petrograd, but soon it began to spread over all Russia, and just before the November revolution took place the first All-Russian Congress of Fctory Shop Committees. At the present time, representatives of the Factory Shop Committees and representatives of the Professional Unions make up the Department of Labor of the new government, and compose the Council of Workers' Control.

A MISTAKE MADE BY BOLSHEVIKI

(From The Boston Traveler, November 21, 1918)

One of the big mistakes made by the Bolsheviki in Russia was their failure after they got in power to keep managing brains in charge of businesses.

They assumed that ownership of properties conferred upon them special magical powers which would enable them to operate businesses efficiently,

If we may believe the dark reports that come from Russia, and there seems to be reason for doubting them, business has been paralyzed, factories are closed down and workers are everywhere down and workers are everywhere idle.

The new rulers would have done better had they tried to save what they could of the old industrial machine, and had used it for their own purposes. Instead, they turned the former owners out, scrapped the managing brains, and all the wheels stopped.

Killing the persons who possessed the knowledge which enabled them to compel the geese to lay golden eggs has proved to be bad.

Power without specialized knowledge and disciplined workers is practically useless.

The first Committees in the private factories were vainly engaged in keeping the industry going, in the face of lack of coal, of raw materials, and especially, the sabotage of the owners and the administrative force, who wanted to shut down. It was a question of life and death to the workers. The newly-formed Shop Committees were forced to find out how many orders the factory had, how much fuel and raw material were on hand, what was the income from the business—in order to determine the wages that could be paid—and to control itself discipline of the workers, and the hiring and discharging of men. In factories which the owners insisted could not keep open, the workers were forced to take charge themselves, and run the business as well as they could.

Some of the experiments were very interesting. For example, there was a cotton factory in Novgorod which was abandoned by its owners The workers—inexperienced in administration,—took charge. The first thing they did was to manufacture enough cloth for their own needs, and then for the needs of the other workers in Novgorod. After that the Shop Committee sent men out to factories in other cities, offering to exchange cotton cloth for other articles they needed—shoes, implements; they exchanged cloth for bread with the peasants; and finally they began to take orders from commercial houses. For their raw material they had to send men south to the cotton-growing country, and then with the railroad employees' union they had to pay with cloth for the transportation of the cotton. So with fuel from the coal mines of the Don.

In the great private industries which remained open, the Factory Shop Committees appointed delegates to confer with the administration about getting fuel, raw material, and even orders. They had to keep account of all that came into the factory, and all that went out. They made a valuation of the entire plant, so as to find out how much the factory was worth, how much stock was held, what the profits were. Everywhere the workers' greatest difficulty was with the owners, who concealed profits, refused orders, and tried in every way to destroy the efficiency of the plant, so as to discredit the workers' organizations. All counter-revolutionary or anti-democratic engineers, clerks, foremen, etc. were discharged by the Factory Shop Committees, nor could they enter any other factory without the recommendation of the Factory Shop Committee of their preceding place of employment. Workers were required to join the union before they were hired, and the Factory Shop Committee supervised the carrying out of all union scales and regulations.

The fight by the capitalists against these Factory Shop Committees was extremely bitter. Their work was hindered at every step. The most extravagant lies have been published in the capitalist press about "lazy workmen" who spent all their time in talking when they should be working—while as a matter of fact the Factory Shop Committees usually had to work eighteen hours a day; about the enormous size of the Committees—while for example at Putilov Works, the largest factory in Petrograd, employing about 40,000 men, the Central Factory Shop Committee, representing eleven departments and 46 shops, consisted of twenty-two men. Even Skobelev, "Socialist" Minister of Labor under the Kerensky government, issued an order in the first part of September that the Factory Shop Committees should only meet "after working-hours", and no longer receive wages for their time on Committee business. As a matter of fact, the Factory Shop Committees were all that kept Russian industry from complete disintegration during the days of the Coalition government. Thus the new Russian industrial order was born of necessity.

Each Factory Shop Committee has five departments: Production and Distribution, Fuel, Raw Materials, Technical Organization of the Industry, and Demobilization (or changing from a war to a peace basis). In each district, all the factories of one industry combined to send two delegates to a district council, and each district council sent one delegate to the city council—which in turn had its delegates in the All-Russian Council, in the Central Committee of the Professional Unions and in the Soviet.

Not all workmen are union workmen in Russia; but every factory worker must be represented in the Factory Shop Committee. And the Factory Shop Committee supplements and completes the work of the Professional Unions, and absolutely controls production at its very source.

This method of controlling production by the workers, sprung spontaneously from the Russian revolution, has just been legalized by the new Workmen's and Peasants' Government of the Russian Republic. Also it has become possible, through the power of the government, for the workmen themselves to take over and operate all plants whose owners cannot keep them open. With unlimited credit behind them, and the huge, organized force of the government, there is no reason why the workers cannot hire engineers and technical staff, or why, with such training, they may not be able, in a few years, to take over the greater part of Russian industrial enterprise. With the control of the means of production and distribution in the hands of the popular government, the main obstacle to the achievement of industrial democracy has vanished.

If Elihu Root's activities in the reorganization of the National Security League into the Predatory Interests Security League will keep him so busy that he will be unable to attend the Peace Conference the continuance of that body may well prove to be a blessing in disguise.

George Bernard Shaw will doubtless feel grateful to the American press for its efforts to make his prediction, that the side that came out on top in this war would skin the other side alive, come true.

While all this talk about reconstruction is going on it might be well to appoint a committee to reconstruct the so-called "Public Libaries" that volunteer public censors have looted in the name of patriotism.